

Quincy bilingual Hands-On Handler/Applicator Training Program

Last years' Hands-on Handler pesticide safety training in Wenatchee was such a success that the Columbia Basin Tree Fruit Society collaborated with the Farmworker Education Program to hold another session this year in Quincy.

Highly experienced bilingual fieldmen and managers conducted the training in cooperation with the Quincy High School Future Farmers of America program and Washington State University Cooperative Extension. About 50 trainees learned and practiced techniques for safe pesticide handling at the March 11 class. Three of the trainers were students in last years' training in Wenatchee.

WHY "HANDS-ON?"

People often learn better by doing. In the hands-on training, small groups of 10 to 12 students rotate through four subjects: mixing and loading, clean up and disposal, personal protective equipment (PPE) and leaks and spills. Participants discuss techniques, do problem-solving activities, and enact real-life scenarios, such as how to properly wear and maintain their PPE. This type of training is excellent because people often feel more comfortable asking questions in a small-group environment.

The training was held in English and Spanish, and intended for agricultural employees who apply and otherwise handle pesticides. Of the 50 trainees who went through the Quincy workshop, approximately two-thirds were Spanish-speaking. Participants received a Worker Protection Standards handler card, or recertification credits (if licensed), and a certificate of attendance.

WHAT DO PEOPLE SAY ABOUT IT?

"Have more trainings of this kind!" is what we heard



A participant puts on safety equipment while trainer Pedro Serrano leads an activity on reading pesticide labels to find safety information.



A trainee learns how to contain and clean up a dry 'pesticide' spill while other participants watch.

most often from the Spanish-speaking participants. English-speaking participants reported that the demonstrations enabled them to learn more about how to use equipment and handle pesticides. Several growers who sent their employees have called us just to say, "Thanks for putting on such a great program!"

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Anyone can put on a hands-on workshop. Department of Agriculture's Farm Worker Education Program (FEP) would be happy to help you. One of our volunteer trainers has already conducted training for his employees.

The curriculum is adapted from a University of California at Davis program and includes Washington standards. The FEP can provide a training booklet and even lend out equipment, if necessary. Most of the props needed are regular shop and household items.

The FEP is developing a supplement to the curriculum that will give agricultural organizations all the information they need to sponsor a hands-on program for their members' employees. This "how-to-do-training" guide will be available by late summer.

For more information, please contact Lisa Drittenbas at (509) 665-3395 or ldrittenbas@agr.wa.gov.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S WORKER PROTECTION WEB SITE:

<http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/safety/workers.htm>